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RAIN Rhythms

College of Nursing & Professional Disciplines

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Fall 2006

# Rain Rhythms: Fall 2006 - Spring 2007

College of Nursing & Professional Disciplines

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# RAIN RHYTHMS

Fall 2006/Spring 2007

## COORDINATOR'S COMMENTS:

One of the greatest joys is going out in Indian country to recruit and seeing all those RAIN graduates out there. After all the years of pushing and pulling to get students to believe they can do it, the opportunities that come with the degree are there. It's hard for them to believe the degree is attainable. They come to know that in their own time. We have to be there for them along the way. Now, many students are coming back to pursue graduate degrees. It takes years to recruit people. It's a learning and trust relationship. You know you've made it when they call you and ask, "When are you coming?" instead of us calling and asking, "Can we come?"

--Deb Wilson

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## *December 2006 Graduates*



December 2006 BSN graduates at the Pinning Ceremony:  
Georgia Morin, Teresa Romero, Heather Counts, and Jacklyn Miller

## *May 2007 Graduates*



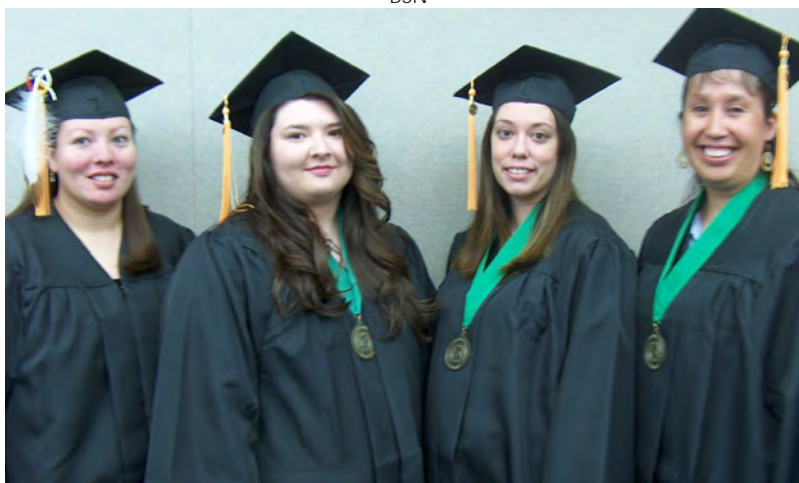
Pam Vallie-Merrifield,  
MSN



Erica Gourneau,  
BSN



Gina Cook,  
MSN



May 2007 BSN graduates at UND's commencement:  
Robbi Baker, Krissie Davis, Angie LaRocque and Winnie Old Coyote



The Pinning Ceremony for the BSN graduates of the College of Nursing honors and affirms their work toward their degrees. In an intimate gathering of family and friends, the ceremony is the closure of the formal academic journey and the beginning of practice for the graduates.

## December 2006 BSN Graduates Pinning Ceremony:



Heather Counts Family



Jacklyn Miller Family



Teresa Romero Family



Georgia Morin Family

## May 2007 BSN Graduates Pinning Ceremony:



Angie LaRocque Family



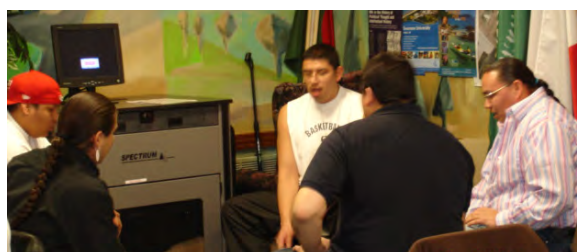
Winnie Old Coyote Family



Robbi Baker Family



Erica Gourneau Family



River's Edge Drum honoring RAIN graduates



Gina Cook and a family member

## RAIN Honor Ceremony: May 2007

The RAIN Program honors graduates with a traditional meal, and each receives a Pendleton blanket.

Coming in the next edition of RAIN RHYTHMS:

- \* New Staff
- \* New Facilities

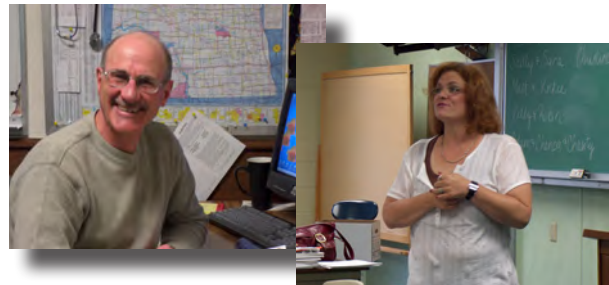


Pictured above are RAIN students Winnie Old Coyote, Pam Vallie-Merrifield, Robbi Baker, Krissie Davis, Angie LaRocque, and Gina Cook. Pam Vallie-Merrifield and Gina Cook received Master of Science in Nursing degrees with a Family Nurse Practitioner specialization. The others graduated with Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees.

UND President Charles Kupchella and College of Nursing Dean Chandice Covington (below) at the groundbreaking for the Northern Plains Center for Behavioral Research, August, 2006.



### RAIN Staff Changes:



In 2007, Barry Striegel (above left), RAIN science mentor, resigned from the program to focus on graduate studies. Ann Graham (above, right), writing mentor, and Kim Lee (not pictured), secretary, resigned from the RAIN program in 2006.

### Nursing Shortage:

According to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, there is a shortage of nurses in the U. S. that will continue for the next 20 years, due in part to our growing aging population and a growing number of nurses who will soon reach retirement age. The nursing shortage, fast becoming an international issue, could create a healthcare crisis in the near future.

*For information on UND's College of Nursing and the RAIN program, go to [www. nursing.und.edu/rain/](http://www.nursing.und.edu/rain/) OR call 701-777-3224*





In June 2007, seventeen RAIN nursing students, Deb Wilson (director), and Marlene Buchner (nurse mentor) boarded a bus and headed for Spokane, WA, and the annual NCONA Education Conference. There they attended sessions on IHS scholarships and requirements for employment, meth abuse on reservations, and job opportunities in the nursing field. The RAIN students had the opportunity to meet potential future employers and nurses from across the country and listen to informative and inspirational conference speakers. The group also toured the Spokane Reservation IHS facility in Wellpinit, WA, and the Benewah Medical Center and the Coeur d'Alene Wellness Center in Plummer, ID.

Pictured above at Glacier National Park (left to right) are Shawna Baker, Ashley Albertson, Sherrie Zupan (sitting), Shawna Ziadah, Krissie Davis, Joy LaFromboise, Robbi Baker, Ismelda Lucio, Diana Lafrombois (front), Johnette Gillis, Tracy Charboneau, and Gayle Almen.

## UND's College of Nursing Alumni Attend NCONA



Left to right, Anthony Agard, Director of Nursing at the Standing Rock IHS, Chandice Covington, Dean of UND's College of Nursing, and Ella Richards, Director of Nursing at the Pine Ridge IHS. Agard and Richards are alums of the CON with BSN degrees.



Bonnie Conner, FNP, UND

Bonnie received the 2007 National Nurse Leadership Council Advanced Practice Nurse of the Year Award at NCONA. She currently works at the White Earth IHS.

The **Indian Health Service (IHS)** grew out of the relationship established in the U.S. Constitution between the federal government and Indian tribes. The goal of IHS is to assure that comprehensive, culturally acceptable personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people. The IHS currently provides health services to approximately 1.5 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to more than 557 federally recognized tribes in 35 states. --from the IHS website: [www.ihs.gov](http://www.ihs.gov)

## An Evening Gathering with Section 112 Nursing Program Staff and Students

Winnie Old Coyote, Georgiana Old Elk (IHS Scholarship Program) and Claudia Thompson (PHN at Fort Peck IHS)



Sandy Haldane, (Nursing Director for IHS), Colleen Mann, (Nursing Program at SDSU), a nursing student from the U of OK, and Beverly Patchell (Director, Nursing Program at the U of OK).



## Photos From NCONA

### Student Travels on the Journey to Spokane and Back

At the Wellpinit, WA,  
IHS Clinic on the  
Spokane Reservation



At the Coeur d'Alene  
Tribal Wellness Center in  
Plummer, ID



Outside the IHS Hospital in  
Browning, MT



At Northern Cheyenne in Lame Deer, MT,  
outside the IHS Clinic.





## ***WIND and RAIN ORIENTATION: Student Workshop***



Pictured above are some of the pre-nursing and nursing students who attended the WIND/RAIN Fall Orientation (August, 2006). WIND--Working for Indian Nurse Development--is funded by a HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration) grant to increase the number of American Indian/Alaskan Indian nurses from disadvantaged backgrounds by providing nursing education opportunities through retention activities, pre-entry preparation activities, and scholarships.

### ***New Admits to UND's Nursing Program, Fall 2006/Spring 2007***

The following pre-nursing RAIN students were admitted to UND's College of Nursing starting Fall 2006: David Azure, Ashley Albertson, Stacey Davis, Tara Drapeaux, Diana LaFrombois, Wendy Blair-Melton, Kendell Graywater, Jamie Kopperdahl, Elisha Lawrence, Nicolette Wolf Leader, Wendy Yankton, Ismelda Lucio, and Leslie Tincher.

The RAIN students admitted to the College of Nursing starting Spring 2007 were Sonya Anderson, Robin Belgarde, Michelle Gourneau, Laura LaRocque, and Kelly McCloud.

## ***Where Are They Now?***

### ***Profile of a RAIN graduate: Crystal Peltier***

Since Crystal Peltier graduated from UND in 2002 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.), she has worked as a nurse and she loves it. Crystal met Deb Wilson in Belcourt, ND (Turtle Mountain Chippewa Reservation) in 1999 when Deb was on a RAIN recruitment trip. According to Crystal, the RAIN program and Deb Wilson "helped pave the road" as she moved to Grand Forks and sought a nursing degree from UND. "Deb Wilson is my angel," says Crystal, who appreciates the financial, emotional, and spiritual help she has received from RAIN.

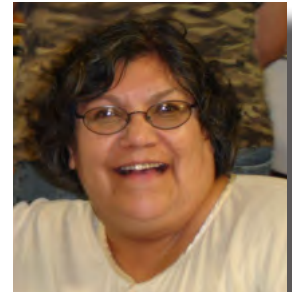
Crystal's work in the medical field is diverse: a CNA in high school, a student nurse internship in Alaska for a summer, two internships at Indian Health Services in Belcourt, ND, one internship in Rapid City, SD, and, with her UND nursing degree, three years at Red Lake IHS in Inpatient and ER/UC. Keeping up with the latest medical technology and research and working with a short staff have posed challenges for Crystal, but she loves being a nurse and hopes to be always involved in nursing in some capacity. When patients and their families thank Crystal for "taking such good care of them," she especially feels the rewards of nursing. "No matter what," she says, "this touches my heart."



Crystal sees UND's RAIN program in her future. She has applied for the masters program in nursing and hopes to start graduate school in the fall of 2007. When her MS in nursing is completed, she sees herself working as a nurse in IHS, perhaps in Phoenix, AZ. She knows the graduate work will be difficult and challenging, but with RAIN staff support, she is excited to continue her healthcare career endeavors.

# RAIN Survey

In order to learn how to improve the program Elizabeth Yellowbird, a PhD student in the Educational Leadership Program at UND, is conducting a research study of student experiences with the RAIN program. The purpose of her research is to determine what activities implemented by the RAIN program personnel were most effective. Lizz has emailed, and sent through US mail, information about the online survey instrument, and she is now preparing to conduct focus groups at various Native American communities. During the fall of 2007, she traveled to North and South Dakota reservations to conduct the focus groups, and to get some hard copies of the survey out to the reservations.



If you are a RAIN graduate and have not filled out the survey yet, we encourage you to do so. To access the RAIN survey, go to [www.nursing.und.edu/rain/](http://www.nursing.und.edu/rain/) and click on "RAIN survey."

## According to the survey, RAIN graduates are saying:

- *"If there were any problems, the RAIN staff was there to help you work them out and to provide the support needed to succeed in your career."*
- *"RAIN has really helped me grow up and get through college. I like how they "hold your hand" initially, but now I have the skills to do things on my own. They gave me confidence in the academic area when I had none. I never considered another university because I knew I would never receive the support I got from RAIN at any other place."*
- *"RAIN was a great experience for me. I encourage Native Americans interested in nursing to attend UND and actively participate in RAIN."*
- *"I loved the RAIN program. If it had not been there when I was in school, I don't think I would have made it. Now I can support my family. Thank you."*
- *"RAIN is a proven success. There should be more programs like RAIN geared toward producing successful Native American nurses. My gratitude goes out to people like Deb Wilson who have made a commitment to the cause and to Native American communities and students."*
- *"I had a wonderful experience while attending college at UND, thanks to the RAIN program. I don't think that I would have made it without the strong support system of the staff."*
- *"The RAIN staff are smart, strong and empowering women who do a terrific job. Congratulations on your success!"*





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# RAIN RHYTHMS

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